

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
**FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA** :  
:  
**v.** : **NO. 24 -CR-370**  
:  
**JAMES SESSOMS** :

## GOVERNMENT'S MOTION FOR PRETRIAL DETENTION

After being located on a warrant within the Western District of North Carolina, defendant James Sessoms, has been returned to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania to answer to an indictment charging him with SNAP fraud, false statements in connection with healthcare and misuse of a social security number.

Defendant was indicted for his schemes in which he deliberately used numerous stolen personal identifiable information in order to commit fraud. The defendant is homeless, lacks community ties, and at this time, Pretrial Services does not recommend Sessoms for release.

As he poses a substantial flight risk, there is currently no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the defendant's appearance as required and the government moves pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3142(f) for a detention hearing and pretrial detention of the defendant.

## I. DETENTION STATUTE

Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3142(f)(2), the defendant may be held if there is a serious risk that such person will flee and there is no condition or conditions which will reasonably assure that person's appearance. Factors to be considered include the nature and

circumstances of the offense charged, the weight of the evidence, and the history and characteristics of the person. 18 U.S.C. § 3142(g).

## **II. MAXIMUM PENALTY**

A violation of 7 U.S.C. § 2024(b) (SNAP fraud) subjects the defendant to 20 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 3 years supervised release, and \$100 special assessment. A violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1035 (False Statements in Connection with Healthcare Matters) subjects the defendant to 5 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 3 years supervised release, and \$100 special assessment. A violation of 42 U.S.C. § 408(a)(7) (Misuse of Social Security Number) subjects the defendant to 5 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, 3 years supervised release, and \$100 special assessment.

Thus, the total maximum sentence is 90 years imprisonment, a fine of \$3,750,000, 3 years supervised release, and a special assessment of \$1,500.

## **III. PROBABLE CAUSE AND THE EVIDENCE IN THIS CASE**

As charged in the indictment, from in or about November 2019 through in or about November 2023, in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania and elsewhere, defendant James Sessoms engaged in a scheme to defraud the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as well as the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (PA-DHS). Defendant Sessoms used a combination of stolen and fictitious personal identifiable information of numerous individuals to submit fraudulent applications to PA-DHS for government benefits, including Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program ("SNAP") benefits and Medicaid benefits. As part of the scheme, Sessoms submitted false and fraudulent identification documents in connection with his applications. As further part of his

scheme, he utilized valid Social Security numbers, assigned to other citizens, in connection with the identities he created and utilized in furtherance of his fraud scheme. Through his scheme, defendant Sessoms caused a loss to the government of approximately \$398,708.58.

The evidence of these crimes is strong. Defendant Sessoms utilized photographs of his own face in connection with the fraudulent identification documents in submitted in connection with each of these fraudulent applications for benefits. In addition, two sources, charged and sentenced for their own similar fraud schemes, identified defendant Sessoms as engaging in these crimes and teaching them how to engage in these crimes. Further, an additional source, charged and awaiting sentencing, also identified Sessoms as engaging in SNAP fraud, by selling him numerous SNAP benefit cards (EBT) under various identities for cash.

Federal agents attempted to locate defendant Sessoms, prior to and after indictment. It is believed that Sessoms does not have residence and resides in various shelters.

After attempting to locate defendant Sessoms within the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, defendant Sessoms was ultimately located in Asheville, North Carolina, the Western District of North Carolina. On or about October 25, 2024, defendant Sessoms was arrested in that district. During his arrest, he falsely provided that his name was “Daniel Biddle” and provided law enforcement with a fraudulent driver’s license purportedly from Washington D.C., bearing the name “Daniel Biddle.” Law enforcement confirmed this was a fraudulent identification document.

During a search incident to lawful arrest, and later confirmed after a search warrant, Sessoms was in possession of numerous false identity documents including:

1. Approximately 55 Social Security cards, which appear to be fraudulent;
2. Approximately 33 Social Security numbers/names found on loose leaf papers and notebooks;

3. Approximately 19 Driver's Licenses, photocopies, from various states including Indiana, Washington D.C., and North Carolina, which appear to be fraudulent;
4. Approximately 56 Birth Certificates from various states including New York, California, Indiana, and New Jersey, which appear to be fraudulent;
5. Approximately 22 different credit/debit/EBT cards in various identities and from various states SNAP programs. Specifically, the names on the various states EBT cards, include: James Marshall, James Collins, Daniel Biddle, James Sessoms, William Murphy, and Jason Williams;
6. Bank statements for 3 separate identities including for Daniel Williams, James Williams, and James Marshall.

With this access to many fraudulent identification documents, including driver's licenses and Social Security cards, as well as financial documents under various identities, indicates that Sessoms is a risk of flight and has the ability to live under a fictitious identity and prevent detection.

#### **IV. RISK OF FLIGHT**

##### **A. Lack of Ties to the Community**

The defendant is a risk of flight and there are no conditions which can reasonably assure his appearance. The defendant lacks ties to the community. The defendant has no home address. He has no physical residence to report to Pretrial in which he can reside. The defendant is not employed and has not had reported employment for an extensive period of time. The defendant does receive food stamps, also known as SNAP benefits. However, it is believed he sells these benefits. Defendant has no ties to the Eastern District of Pennsylvania or to any community. Defendant Sessoms lack of stable housing and contacts, makes supervision

essentially impossible, which is necessary to ensure he complies with pretrial conditions of release. Without stable housing, defendant Sessoms is a risk of flight and should be detained.

Further, through this scheme to defraud, it is evident that defendant uses multiple fraudulent identification documents, including but limited to fraudulent driver's licenses, stolen society security numbers and financial documents in at least three identities. Defendant Sessoms has access to someone capable of making fraudulent identification documents. Information provided by sources in this investigation, indicated that Sessoms himself is capable of making these identification documents.

In addition to his lack of any community ties and ability to use numerous identities, defendant Sessoms has demonstrated he is a risk of flight as he is currently wanted on two state warrants. He currently has two outstanding state warrants in the State of New Jersey and the State of Wisconsin.

Accordingly, the Government requests that this Court rule that the defendant remain in custody at this time and pending trial.

**B. Prior Warrants**

Defendant Sessoms has active warrants in the state of New Jersey and Wisconsin.

On May 24, 2007, a warrant was issued in New Jersey, by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office, for a violation of Probation for a burglary offense. On January 24, 2019, a warrant was issued in the state of Wisconsin, for fraud and theft offenses.

With this history, he demonstrates he poses a significant risk of flight and should be detained.

**V. CONCLUSION**

When the defendant's history and circumstances are viewed together with the strong evidence in this case, it is clear that the defendant has every incentive to flee, and that no condition or combination of condition will reasonably assure the presence of the defendant as required.

WHEREFORE, the government respectfully submits that its Motion for Defendant's Pretrial Detention should be granted.

Respectfully submitted,

JACQUELINE C. ROMERO  
United States Attorney

s/ Megan Curran  
MEGAN CURRAN  
Special Assistant United States Attorney

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**JAMES SESSOMS** :

**PRETRIAL DETENTION ORDER**

AND NOW, this       day of                      , 2024, after an evidentiary hearing and argument of counsel for the government and the defendant, the Court finds that the government has proven that no condition or combination of conditions will reasonably assure the appearance of the defendant as required.

The Court makes the following findings of fact:

- A. There is probable cause to believe that the defendant violated Title 7, United States Code, Section 2024(b), SNAP fraud; Title 18, United States Code, Section 1035, false statements in connection with healthcare; and Title 42, United States Code, Section 408(a)(7), as evidenced in the government's motion for pretrial detention and the indictment.
- B. The evidence in this case is strong.
- C. The defendant is a risk of flight due to his lack of any location in which he can be monitored by Pretrial Services as well as due to his two open warrants in the State of New Jersey and Wisconsin.
- D. The defendant is a risk of flight due to his demonstrated history of utilizing numerous false identities and his ability to procure false identities.

Therefore, IT IS ORDERED that the defendant be committed to the custody of the Attorney General for confinement in a correction facility separate, to the extent practicable, from persons awaiting or serving sentences or being held in custody pending appeal; that the defendant be afforded reasonable opportunity for private consultation with counsel; and that, on order of a Court of the United States, or on request of an attorney for the government, the person in charge of the corrections facility in which the defendant is confined deliver the defendant to a United States Marshal for the purpose of an appearance in connection with a court proceeding.

BY THE COURT:

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HONORABLE ELIZABETH T. HEY  
*United States Magistrate Judge*

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that a copy of the Government's Motion for Pretrial Detention, and Proposed Order was served by email and/or Electronic Court Filing, on the following defense counsel:

Jordan G. Zeitz, Esquire  
Counsel for Defendant  
18 West Front Street  
Media, Pennsylvania 19063

/s/ Megan Curran  
MEGAN CURRAN  
Special Assistant United States Attorney

Date: November 19, 2024